

Halflings: A Story of True Love

by StoryGirl1997

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Summary: Two creatures called Halflings and their pet dragon are sent to rescue the chief of Berk's daughter, who unknown to them is under a curse that can only be broken by true love. AU.

1. Chapter 1

Chapter 1: The Halflings

This is a bit like a rewriting of a certain story I'm sure you'll recognize as the story progresses, only more friendly and a little more supernatural. This idea came to me so suddenly, I wasn't sure what to do at first. I decided to try and write it down, and as much as I try not to have too many stories going at once, I want to write this while my memory is fresh.

* * *

><p>There is a peaceful village that was built underneath a tall mountain. It is called the village of Berk. All of the villagers are led by a kind chief named Arter Hofferson, whose name is known throughout the land.

And so, it was with great joy that the chief and his wife were blessed with a beautiful baby girl, who was said to carry in the chief's kindness._

But then, it was revealed that the chief's daughter was victim to a terrible curse, which could only be broken by true love._

For a few years, Arter and his wife intended to hide the curse, secluding their daughter in her room. But then, they came up with another idea._

So, they sent their daughter to an abandoned island, which was the

home of a fearsome, fire-breathing monster of a dragon known as the Red Death._

Day after day, year after year, many brave and strong Viking warriors attempted to free the chief's daughter from the dreadful seclusion. The one who succeeded was to be her true love, and in reward for rescuing her, would receive her hand in marriage, and the chance to break the curse for good. But of the many that tried, none prevailed.

And so, the chief's daughter waits inside the dragon's nest, chained to a large boulder, waiting for the day her true love would come rescue her. It was believed that only her one true love would be able to break the chains and free her, as well as break the curse that only few people know about....

"HICCUP!"

The teenager was struck out of his daydream but his sister's shout.

"Come on, Heather, I just got to the best part!"

"Please tell me that you're not reading the story scroll about the chief's daughter again!"

"It's my favorite story! No one knows how the story will end, it's like they're waiting for someone to write the rest of it themselves."

"You don't really believe that someone will be able to save her do you?"

Since Heather hadn't read the story scroll before, she didn't know about the curse that the chief's daughter was victim to.

"I've been reading and hearing about this for so long, I actually know the name of the chief's daughter."

"Really? And what would it be?"

There was a moment of silence before Hiccup spoke again.

"Astrid."

"What?"

"Her name is Astrid."

"Whatever, just come on out of your little corner and help me catch us some breakfast!"

Hiccup sighed, rolled up the story scroll, and put it away on a bookshelf that he and Heather had built. As soon as the story scroll was back in place, Hiccup turned and walked out of the cave he had been in. He stepped out into the sunlight, where a strange-looking creature was waiting for him.

You see, Hiccup and Heather were no ordinary teenagers. They were

half-human and half-dragon creatures called Halflings.

They both were covered in green scaly skin, had large wings that enabled them to fly, green eyes, and fingernails that were long and sharp like the talons of a dragon. But there were some differences between the two of them as well. Hiccup was slightly younger than his twin sister, and had a slightly smaller wingspan. And while Heather had long black hair in a braid, Hiccup had short brown hair.

As the two Halflings spread their wings to go and catch some fish for breakfast, Heather told her brother, "Don't forget to feed Firecracker when we get back." Firecracker was their pet Terrible Terror. "Don't worry," Hiccup said, "I haven't forgotten before, and there's no way I'm going to forget now." Heather smiled at her brother before they took off.

There was a reasonable explanation that the two of them looked the way they did. Their human mother was kidnapped by an evil dragon, and he kept her there for many months. After he was through with her, he sent her back home to her husband. Much later, she gave birth to twins, but they were half-human and half-dragon. After their birth, their mother told her husband about the dragon, and he went out and killed it. He then banished the Halflings, which he called "hideous monsters," up into the mountain that was now known as Halfling Mountain.

But the truth was, Hiccup and Heather weren't the hideous monsters everyone thought they were. People that lived in the village of Berk had the tendency to judge everyone and everything by the way they looked. Because of this, Heather decided it was best to stay hidden within their cave. But Hiccup knew that all that really mattered was what was buried deep within, not what was on the surface. He had tried to show others many times before, but it was always the same treatment. Backing away from him, and running away, back to the village without listening to a word the young Halfling said.

Hiccup always thought that if he and Heather did something for the good of the people, they would stop viewing them as monsters. He almost never had his nose out of a book or scroll, and his favorite stories were those about noble heroes doing noble things and saving people. How he longed to be one of these heroes, it would be his chance to prove that he and Heather were really kind and compassionate creatures. But Heather always told him that it was better to stick with reality.

But despite what everyone said, Hiccup never let go of his dreams.

After Hiccup and Heather returned with their talon-like hands full of carps and cods, Hiccup fed one of the fish to Firecracker, as he said he would. It was then that the two Halflings could eat their breakfast, using their fire breath to cook the fish. "_Still holding on to your dreams, Hiccup?"_ Firecracker asked. Being half-dragons, Heather and Hiccup could understand what other dragons were saying. "Still holding on," Hiccup said with a smile. Firecracker was the only one who supported him.

And unknown to all of them, they'd be given a chance to make Hiccup's dreams a reality.

* * *

><p>Snotlout was a very rude and selfish Viking. Whenever he walked through the village, there were murmurs amongst the others about his personality. But if they were to judge him by his looks like they did with everything else, they'd see a muscular Viking teen suitable for being chief. And he'd be a good one if it weren't for his selfishness. His father, Spitelout Jorgenson, always told him that he'd be a good chief, because he was strong and never feared anything. They both ran in a family of selfish Vikings who cared of nothing of anyone else.</p>

As Snotlout returned to his home, he welcomed the twins, Tuffnut and Ruffnut Thorston, who both served him and his father. The twins showed him in, and followed him as he walked through the front door. They'd all heard many time over about the chief's daughter being trapped in the nest of the Red Death, but Snotlout was far too lazy to go and rescue her himself.

He summoned for his messenger, Fishlegs Ingeman. The large, anxious boy came into the room with a scroll in his hands. "Tell me everything about the chief's daughter," Snotlout commanded.

Fishlegs nodded and opened the scroll. "Well, her name is Astrid Hofferson, she's very tough, and very beautiful, and she's still awaiting the day her true love will rescue her. And it's believed that she's starting to doubt that it will ever happen." "Well, she won't have to doubt anymore, because her true love is going to send someone to rescue her," Snotlout said.

Fishlegs gulped nervously. "I should probably also mention the little thing that happens at night," he said to himself. He was one of the few people, other than Arter and Sigrid Hofferson, that knew about Astrid's curse. "I will find someone to save her, and bring her to me!" Snotlout said. "Yes, sir. But you see, after sunset..." "SILENCE!" Fishlegs immediately shut up.

Satisfied, Snotlout snapped his fingers twice, and the twins stood alert. "Set up some flyers around the village," Snotlout said, "There's going to be a tournament!"

* * *

><p>You can probably guess where this story is going, but it's a little different. I'm not sure how the idea came to me, but I can't seem to hold it in. Review, follow, or favorite if you want, and I'll try to stay on top of all my stories as best I can.

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2: The Quest

I've been doing my best to stay on top of everything, and so far so good. Now let's continue.

* * *

><p>The next day started out as usual on top of Halfling Mountain.

Hiccup read a few story scrolls, one of them being the one about Astrid. Then he went and caught some breakfast with Heather, and gave Firecracker one of the fish they caught. It probably would have gone normal if they hadn't heard the sound of a horn.<p>

"What do you think is going on?" Hiccup asked. "Don't know, don't care," Heather replied. "Well I care," Hiccup said, spreading his wings and leaving the cave.

Heather immediately started after him. "Hiccup, what are you doing? Get back here! We have to stay in the cave!" But Hiccup didn't listen to her. The sound of the horn had come in the direction of the village, so that's where he was heading.

When Hiccup got to the village, he landed up on top of a house and watched as all of the Vikings walked toward the arena. "The tournament's beginning," said one of the Vikings. "I wonder who'll win," said another. So there's a tournament, Hiccup thought, Wonder what it's all about.

It was about then that Heather caught up with him, with Firecracker on her shoulder. "What are you doing?! We have to get back to the cave, now!" But Hiccup still didn't listen. "There's a tournament being held, we should go and see it!" "Have you lost your scales?!" Heather asked. Hiccup rolled his eyes. He knew that whenever he and Heather said that to each other, they were asking if they were crazy. "My scales are fine, and I'm going to go check it out." He spread his wings and followed the Vikings that had walked to the arena. Heather and Firecracker had no choice but to follow him.

* * *

><p>When the three of them reached the arena, they landed at the entrance that led inside. "What do you say we get a close-up of the combatants?" Hiccup asked, opening the doors. "You're crazier than I thought you were," Heather muttered. "*At least he gets ideas,*" Firecracker said, "It'd be a shame if he couldn't think properly." "I already think he can't think properly," Heather replied.

Hiccup got the doors open, and he stepped into the arena. There was a group of bulky Vikings standing in the arena, their attention on something above them, outside the arena. Heather and Firecracker followed Hiccup into the arena. Heather was about to pull her brother back, when a voice caught their attention. Snotlout stood above the arena next to the chief's chair. Sitting in the chair was none other than Arter Hofferson himself.

"The champion of the tournament," Snotlout announced, "Will receive the honor, no, the privilege of rescuing Arter's daughter from the monstrous Red Death!" The crowd booed at the sound of the dragon's name. Snotlout continued, "If, for any reason, the winner is unsuccessful in his quest, the next winner will take his place." he leaned in and whispered to Arter, "And so on." He turned to the crowd. "I can assure you that this action is a sacrifice that I, being the future chief of this village, am willing to make for the chief and his daughter." The crowd burst into applause._

>

"Now let the tournament begin!"

The Viking warriors all turned to the weapons rack, and then noticed the two Halflings in the arena. Snotlout noticed them as well. "What are those?" The crowd gasped. Obviously, they all noticed the Halflings as well. Snotlout snorted. "How hideous!"

Hiccup frowned. "Well, that's not very nice," he said, and turned and looked at Firecracker. "It's just a dragon." Heather and Firecracker both looked at Hiccup with looks of shock. "Of course," Snotlout muttered. He then shouted, "New plan! The one who kills the Halflings will be named champion!"

The Viking warriors all grabbed their weapons and advanced on the Halflings. "I told you this was a bad idea!" Heather said to Hiccup. They backed away from the Vikings until they both bumped against the wall. They were trapped. "Looks like it's time to unleash our inner dragon," Hiccup said. Heather agreed. They both faced the Vikings and breathed powerful blasts of fire. The Vikings were knocked back, trying to dodge and douse the flames.

The Halflings split up and each took on a group of Vikings. Although they were both on the scrawny side, they both had the strength and endurance of a dragon ten times their size. They knocked back and knocked out one Viking after another, without hesitating. Before they knew it, all of the people in the crowd were cheering for them. Soon, all of the Vikings warriors were down and out.

The crowd went nuts. The people who once feared the Halflings were now cheering for them, like they were one of their own. Hiccup smiled and waved at their new fans. Heather couldn't hold back a smile as she watched her brother wave at the people in the crowd. But Snotlout wasn't impressed in the same way as the other people. He signaled the archers, who all readied their crossbows. The crowd gasped again. "Are you sure you should be doing this?" Arter asked. "Why not?" Snotlout asked. Arter glared at him. "I'm the chief here," he said, "So I'll make the decision."

With that he stood up and announced, "Good people of Berk, I give you, our champions!" The crowd cheered again, and Hiccup and Heather exchanged matching looks of confusion. "Congratulations, Halflings," Arter said, "You and your pet dragon have earned the honor of embarking on a quest to save my daughter." "Wait, us?" Hiccup asked. "Yes, you," Arter said, "Both of you and your loyal pet as well." "Can we get anything in exchange?" Hiccup asked. "Anything, my good friend," Arter replied.

It seemed weird for Arter to call him a friend, but Hiccup didn't hesitate. "I'm sure the three of us would really appreciate it if you and the others in your village treated us with the respect that we were refused. And it would make me happy if you didn't call us monsters anymore. We're really not that bad." Arter nodded. "I can see that," he said, "You have a deal. If you are successful in your quest to save my daughter, I promise that you and your family will be made allies to the village. You'll have all of the respect you deserve, and anything else of your request."

Grateful for the chief's kindness, Hiccup bowed. "We'll do our best, and we'll try to bring your daughter back." "I send you best wishes and good luck," Arter said with a smile. He believed in the

Halflings, and he was sure that they could really help out.

* * *

><p>"*So, let me get this straight,*" Firecracker said as he watched his friends pack up their belongings, "We have to go and save the chief's daughter from the Red Death, and in return, Arter will give us his respect?" "And his honor," Hiccup said, "Don't forget his honor." Heather chuckled, "I can't remember why I tried to stop you in the first place." "I knew you'd thank me later," Hiccup said with a smile. He swung a basket full of fish onto his shoulder and the all headed outside their cave.

"You guys ready?" Hiccup asked. Heather and Firecracker nodded. "Okay, let's go." They all took off, heading in the direction of Death Island.

* * *

><p>All I can say is, leave a review and tell me what you think.

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3: The Rescue

The name of the chapter says what will happen, and what the Halflings will encounter.

* * *

><p>Death Island was a very unpleasant island. It had a rocky surface, and not a single plant or animal was in sight. But of course, the island wasn't as empty as it looked. It was the home of the Red Death, the dragon guarding the chief's daughter.</p>

Hiccup, Heather, and Firecracker all landed on the rocky beach, the rocks clacking. They all knew that they had to get inside the nest, which was a giant volcano. That was where Astrid was being kept.

"_Okay, this place is just plain freaky!_" squeaked Firecracker. Heather shushed him. "Right, stay_ _quiet,_" Firecracker muttered. But it was hard to stay quiet when there were remains of all of the Viking heroes that had attempted and failed to kill the Red Death all over the island. Firecracker whispered a scream and ran to catch up with the Halflings.

"_Okay,_" the little dragon said nervously, "Let's say that one of us is feeling a little uneasy about this place, and that he would like to go back to the damp, cozy cave, which one of us has often said is cramped and cold. And just to be clear, that someone is not me._" However, he wasn't looking where he was going, and bumped into the carcass of a Viking that had died in battle. He shrieked, immediately contradicting what he had just said.

Heather sighed in frustration. "Firecracker, two words: Be. Quiet. Now let's go and see if we can find that giant dragon." "What?! Have you lost your scales, Heather?!" "No, because I have a plan," the

female Halfling replied, "Hiccup will go rescue Astrid, while the two of us distract the Red Death." "_That's not a really well thought-out plan to me,_" Firecracker replied nervously. Hiccup shrugged. "As long as it works, I guess..." He spread his wings and took off, heading for the volcano.

"_Since when did you start coming up with plans?_" Firecracker asked. "Trust me," Heather said in annoyance, "My plan is definitely better than whatever excuse for a plan you had."

Little did they know, three giant pairs of eyes were watching them.

* * *

><p>It didn't take long for Hiccup to get inside the Red Death's nest. There was a large opening in the side, where he assumed the Red Death came and went.</p>

The inside of the nest was very dark, rocky, and somewhat warm. A red mist seemed to cover the entire area, making it nearly impossible to see anything. Hiccup landed on the rocky floor of the nest. "Hello?" he called through the mist. His voice echoed throughout the nest, hopefully making it so that Astrid would hear him. After a few minutes of silence, Hiccup called out again, louder this time. "Hello!"

Still no answer.

_I guess she can't hear me, _he said in his thoughts. Just then, he heard a voice.

"Who's there?"

Hiccup turned in the direction the voice had come from. Was he hearing things? "What?" he called out. "I said 'who's there,'" the voice said again. Hiccup wasn't hearing things. There was someone in the nest with him. "Listen, I'm here to rescue you," he said. "That's what I would assume," Astrid replied, "But who are you? And where are you?"

Hiccup had forgotten that Astrid couldn't see him. He followed her voice slowly, not wanting to startle her with his appearance. "Are you sure you want to see this?" He asked. "It would help if I could see you," Astrid said, "And can you tell me what your name is?" Hiccup hesitated before replying, "My name is Hiccup. And trust me when I say you don't want to see this." "Why wouldn't I?" Astrid asked.

Hiccup sighed. If she wanted to see him, he figured that he'd have to let her see him. He spread his wings and lifted above the mist. The flapping of his wings caused the mist to clear up, revealing a girl around his age chained up to a rock. The shackles of the chains were around her wrists, and the other ends were pushed deep inside the rock, where no one could pull them out.

Hiccup nearly stopped flapping his wings when he saw her. He had read in the scroll that she was beautiful, but in person, she seemed even more so. Her long blonde hair was braided, and even though some of it hung in front of her eyes, he could just make out their ocean-blue

color. It was no wonder that many young Vikings had come to rescue her. But he assumed that it was for her looks, and nothing else.

Hesitating slightly, he slowly dropped to the floor of the nest, landing in front of Astrid, who turned her attention to the sound of flapping wings. She gasped at what she saw.

Hiccup tried to explain. "Listen, I know that I look weird and freaky, but there's no reason to be scared, I just..." "What in the world are you?!" Astrid shouted. "I'm a Halfling," Hiccup said, "But I'm not going to hurt you, I want to help you." "The rumors were true," Astrid muttered. Somehow, she'd heard of the Halflings that lived on top of Halfling Mountain.

Hiccup took a step toward her. "Stay away from me!" she said. "I don't want to hurt you," Hiccup said, "I only want to help. Just trust me." "And why should I trust you?" Astrid asked. "Because you can't judge someone before you get to know them," Hiccup said calmly.

Astrid's expression changed suddenly. She looked at Hiccup with a mix of confusion and surprise. It was true, she shouldn't have judged him by the way he looked, but from what she heard about the Halflings...

Then again, there was something about the way he talked to her. He was gentle, kind, and caring. She looked up at him. There was something about his eyes that seemed to enchant her. Maybe it was the fact of how green they were. Maybe it was that they seemed rather human-like. Or maybe it was the compassion and kindness that was hidden underneath his looks, that everyone failed to try and see.

Astrid nodded, slightly, but surely.

Satisfied, Hiccup slowly approached, pausing only to breathe small flames of fire on his hands. He knelt down and grabbed the shackles on Astrid's wrists, the heat on his hands causing them to break.

Once the shackles were off, Astrid rubbed her wrists, unable to believe that they had fallen off. She looked up at the Halfling that had helped her, and found herself staring into his eyes once again. "Thank you," she said quietly. Hiccup gave her a small smile.

Just then, a loud roar split the air.

"You didn't kill the Red Death?!" Astrid shouted. "The others are distracting it," Hiccup explained, "Now let's go!" He hovered above her, and grabbed her arms. "Wait, you mean _fly_?" Astrid asked in shock. "I would assume that would be the only way out," Hiccup said. He then took off, heading for the hole that he had gone through earlier. "I'm sure that you should know that I prefer traveling on the ground!" Astrid said as Hiccup carried her up into the air. Hiccup shrugged. "A little late for that isn't it?" he asked.

* * *

><p>Heather and Firecracker were doing what they were supposed to,

distracting the Red Death. But it was hard to stay out of the line of sight of a dragon that had six eyes. "I told you this was a bad idea!" Firecracker said as he dodged yet another blast of fire from the angry giant. "Well, you could have gone with Hiccup and get Astrid!" Heather shouted back. "You mentioned us?" said a voice. Both Heather and Firecracker turned to see Hiccup carrying Astrid.

"_Okay, great, can we please LEAVE NOW?!" Firecracker screamed. The Red Death roared and charged up its fire breath. "Yes, I think we can leave now," Hiccup replied.

With that, the two Halflings and the Terrible Terror turned on their tails and began to fly away. But the Red Death had wings. It could fly too. It flapped its wings powerfully, taking off of the ground. "I guess we should have seen this coming," Hiccup said. But the Red Death had a weakness. After wasting all of the hydrogen in its second pair of lungs, it didn't have enough left to help it stay airborne for long. The Halflings, Astrid, and Firecracker all sighed with relief as the Red Death slowly sank back down to the ground, exhausted.

As they departed from the island, the Red Death roared at them in rage and defeat.

* * *

><p>I read somewhere that dragons most likely had a second pair of lungs, which filled up with hydrogen. The hydrogen is used to produce fire, and help lift the dragon into the air. **If that were true, I'm sure the Red Death would have run out of ammo and flight ability after a huge fire blast or two. Another movie that's probably not scientifically accurate again. But all in all, it's a good movie. Review, follow, or favorite.**

4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4: Camping

Astrid has been saved, and she's hiding something that very few people know about. I'm sure that you all know what it is, but it'll still be kept a secret to the viewers as well as the characters in the story.

* * *

><p>It seemed like hours before they finally found an island to rest on. And just in time too. Astrid couldn't take anymore of the flying. Hiccup wasn't sure if it was because she was afraid of heights, or if she just didn't like flying at all.</p>

The second they landed on the next island they found, Astrid dropped to all fours, happy to be on the ground again. Hiccup gave her a weird look. He wouldn't have been surprised if she started kissing the ground. But she'd probably prefer to save all of the kissing for her true love.

Whoever that would be.

"I can't believe that happened," Astrid said quietly. Heather and Firecracker looked at her as if they expected her to dig up the dirt.

Hiccup approached the slightly frightened girl. "We only wanted to help you, we never meant to..." He stopped talking when Astrid looked up at him. Her eyes met his own.

Hiccup drew in a deep breath. There was something about her eyes that seemed to captivate him. They were so blue, he thought he could see the ocean reflected in them. So blue...and beautiful. He couldn't bring himself to say anything to her.

Astrid was having similar thoughts about the way his eyes seemed to captivate her. She could almost see the forest reflected in them. She remembered how they looked back when she first saw him. Green, caring, compassionate...and loving. She slowly stood up to his eye level, her eyes never leaving his.

Hiccup was the first to speak. "I...I, uh...I never noticed how...how your eyes looked. I mean, I don't think they're bad, I mean, they're honestly beautiful. But that's...probably not the only thing about you that's...attractive." It took him a while to form all of the words he wanted to say. "You think I'm beautiful?" Astrid asked, a light blush appearing on her cheeks. "Not just that," Hiccup said, "I also think that you're extremely tough and, I think that you might also be a bit on the stubborn side, but I'm sure that anyone who actually gets to know you might not actually mind it at all. Know what I mean?"

Astrid did understand what he meant, but she had never expected him to say any of that to her. "And you think that's what makes me attractive?" she asked. Hiccup nodded. "I do." Astrid blushed even more. "That's the nicest thing that anyone's ever said to me," she said, "Thanks." Hiccup breathed a laugh. "It...it was nothing, really." They smiled at one another. Just then, Astrid's smile faded. "Your wings are turning red."

Hiccup was confused. "What?" He turned around. Sure enough, the skin of his wings had turned a bright red. "Oh, uh...this is normal. It...usually happens when I get a compliment that I like." He tucked his wings close to his body to hide the red skin. "So, it's like blushing?" Astrid asked. "Yeah, yeah, it's...it's like blushing," Hiccup replied, still trying to hide his wings. "I didn't know that Halflings could do that," Astrid admitted. "It doesn't really happen to us that often," Hiccup said. "You don't have to hide it you know," Astrid said to him, "I actually kind of like it."

Hiccup looked at her. "Really?" Astrid nodded. "Yeah, I...I think it...it shows a part of you that...you know...that I think people should know about." "That Halflings blush?" Hiccup asked. "That Halflings have feelings," Astrid said, "just like us." Hiccup smiled, his wings unfurling and turning a brighter shade of red. "Thanks." Astrid smiled back at him. "By the way, thanks for saving me." "You're welcome."

Hiccup couldn't believe what was happening. The girl that had first seen him as a freak of nature was now talking to him, and giving him compliments, which made him blush. Was he falling in love?

Astrid also couldn't believe she was doing this either. It was true, many people, including her at one point, viewed the Halflings as a sort of monster, because of the way they looked. But the creature she was talking to didn't act like a monster at all. He was a kind, caring person that didn't leave a loved one behind, whether it be friend or family. In fact, as she spoke to him, she felt a sudden warmth bloom in her chest. She didn't know it, but she had developed feelings for the Halfling.

Tired of seeing the two of them stand there, Heather decided to speak up. "Okay, enough with the goo-goo eyes, we've got to get going." Hiccup nodded. "Right, we gotta get you home." Astrid snapped out of her trance. "Right, the sooner the better." Hiccup shrugged. "I guess we'll have to walk across this island, since you don't like flying. But don't worry, we'll find a way to get you home." "Okay, thanks," Astrid said. Without warning, she punched him in the arm. "What was that for?" Hiccup asked. "That's for scaring me," Astrid said. Then, after hesitating, she grabbed the front of his shirt, pulled him in, and kissed his cheek. "That's for...everything else," she said nervously. She then walked away, heading for the other side of the island.

Did she just kiss me? Hiccup asked himself. He couldn't describe what had just happened. Heather and Firecracker were also very surprised.

Astrid looked back at her three new friends. "Are you guys coming or what?" "Yeah, we're coming," Heather replied. Hiccup was too stunned to speak. He started after his friends, and they all started their journey.

* * *

><p>"I feel like we've been walking for hours," Hiccup said. Astrid rolled her eyes. "We've only been walking for ten minutes. Don't tell me you're exhausted already." "We're Halflings," Hiccup said, "We're used to flying. We don't really walk much. But hey, if we keep up this pace, we might get you back home by lunchtime tomorrow." </p>

Astrid stopped walking. "Tomorrow?" She looked at the sky. The sun was beginning to set. Oh, no, she thought to herself. "It'll really take that long? Shouldn't we stop and make camp?" The Halflings stopped walking and looked back at her. "No, I don't think so," Heather said, "That'll only take longer. We can just keep going." They resumed walking.

Astrid trailed behind, trying to think of a way to make them change their minds. "But...there's...cougars in the woods!" Firecracker dug his claws into Heather's shoulder. "Woah, time out! Camping is definitely starting to sound better!" Heather rolled her eyes. "Relax, you overgrown newt with wings," she said in frustration and annoyance, "We'll be able to scare away anything we come across in this forest."

Astrid suddenly dashed in front of them. "I need to find somewhere to camp NOW!"

Her yell echoed through the forest, causing some birds to fly away in fright. Hiccup, Heather, and Firecracker all wore matching

expressions of shock and fear. Clearly, what Heather had said before was wrong.

* * *

><p>Minutes later, the small group found a hollow pile of rocks on top of a small cliff overlooking the island. Heather pushed a rock aside, revealing the space inside. "How's this?" She asked. Hiccup looked inside the makeshift cave. "Okay, I'm not sure if this is really suitable for her," he said gesturing to Astrid, whose eye was on the setting sun. The sun was extremely close to being halfway gone.</p>

"No, it's perfect," Astrid said, turning around, "It just needs a few homey touches." "Homey touches?" Hiccup repeated, "Like what?" Astrid shrugged. "I don't know, maybe something like...a door." Hiccup nodded. "Hang on." He rushed toward a large tree, and tore off a giant piece of bark. "How's this?"

Astrid ran over to take the piece of bark from Hiccup. "It's perfect," she said. Just briefly, their fingers brushed against each other. Hiccup's muscles relaxed under her touch, and Astrid took the bark from him, not noticing that her heart warmed slightly at his touch. Astrid then hurried back to the cave. "Okay, guys, goodnight." She then backed in, wedging the door into the entrance.

Hiccup walked up to the door to the cave. "If you need anything, you know, you can always ask us," he said. "I SAID GOODNIGHT!" Astrid yelled. Hiccup backed away in complete shock. Heather put a hand on his shoulder. "Just let it go," she said gently. She then turned to rest out on the cliff, with Firecracker following. Hiccup started after them, stopping to glance back at the cave that Astrid was in. He remembered their conversation earlier, and the way their fingers brushed against each other's. A huge wave of warmth spread throughout his body, mostly in his heart.

Confirmation of earlier. He had definitely fallen in love.

* * *

><p>Obviously, Astrid just met her true love, and she doesn't know it yet. And you all probably know already what happens to her after the sun sets. And Hiccup's fallen in love with her. Review, follow, or favorite.

5. Chapter 5

Chapter 5: Growing Feelings

Now to see how the journey home will progress. And when will Astrid realize that she's found her true love?

* * *

><p>The small group all slept great that night. Astrid was the first to wake up the next morning. The sun had just risen into the sky, and there wasn't a single cloud in the sky. It was going to be a great day. As she emerged from the cave, Astrid glanced at the others, who were all fast asleep. She smiled to herself. There was still time for

her to get something to eat. She walked into the forest.<p>

When Hiccup woke up, the door to the cave was open, and Astrid was nowhere to be seen. Had she left without them? "Good morning." A nearby voice caught his attention. He turned to see none other than Astrid, carrying an armful of berries she had picked in the forest. "What's all this for?" Hiccup asked. Astrid sighed. "Look, we probably got off on a bad start when we met, and that's mostly my fault, so I just wanted to make it up to you." She walked over and set the berries on the ground near Hiccup. "Y'know, I haven't really tried these before," he said nervously. "Well, you never know if you'll like them until you try them," Astrid said.

Hiccup picked a strawberry out of the pile, and with Astrid's encouragement, took a bite of it. He chewed for a minute before his eyes widened. He swallowed. "This is good," he said, "This is really good! I don't know why I didn't try these earlier!" His voice woke up Heather and Firecracker. "What's all the noise?" Heather asked. Astrid looked over at the female Halfling and smiled. "Glad to see you're up," she said. Heather and Firecracker were confused.

Astrid stood up to go get some food for herself. "Eat up," she said to her friends, "We've got a big day ahead of us!"

* * *

><p>Later, the small group continued walking through the forest, heading for the other side of the island. "You know, I haven't really heard you complain yet," Astrid said. "Yeah, so?" Hiccup asked. "We've been walking for more than half an hour, don't tell me that you're not tired," Astrid said. "Well," Hiccup said, shrugging, "I guess you could say that I've gotten used to it." "So have I," Astrid muttered. "What?" Hiccup asked. Astrid's eyes widened. Had she said that out loud?<p>

"I meant that I've gotten used to how you look," she said. "Really?" Hiccup asked. "Well, yeah, I mean, it doesn't really matter how you look, does it?" Astrid asked. Hiccup shook his head. Astrid smiled. "Then, you're right," she said, "You really shouldn't judge people before you get to know them." "Have you been trying to get to know me?" Hiccup asked. Astrid nodded. "I have," she said, "Because I know that unlike what everyone thinks, you have feelings. You try to get to know people so that you can understand them more, you don't judge them by their looks. You're a really nice person, or dragon, or...Halfling." "You really mean that, don't you?" Hiccup asked, a light blush appearing on his wings. Astrid's smile widened, and she nodded.

"You're a really nice person too," Hiccup said. This caused a light blush to appear on Astrid's cheeks. "Thanks," she said. She then took his hand in her own. Hiccup's smile faded, and his blush faded as well. "Is something wrong?" Astrid asked, concerned. "No, it's just...well, no one's ever held my hand before," Hiccup said nervously. "Well, then allow me to be the first," Astrid said, giving him a small smile. Hiccup looked at her and smiled back.

Heather and Firecracker trailed behind. It didn't take a genius to figure out that Hiccup had fallen in love with Astrid. And Astrid was also falling in love with him.

As her heart warmed this time, Astrid realized that she had fallen in love. She had developed feeling for the Halfling, and she knew that he had feelings for her as well.

She had met her true love. The only question was how she was going to tell him that.

* * *

><p>Throughout the entire journey from one island to another, Hiccup and Astrid's feelings for one another grew. They had both fallen in love with each other. They both ignored Hiccup's looks and tried to focus on the things deep within each other. Once, as the two of them continued to talk, Astrid asked Hiccup why he liked her eyes</p>

"Because, they're just so...blue. It's like I can see the ocean reflected in them. And I know that, even though many people focus on what's on top of the ocean, there's things down beneath that we might not know about yet. The same way with you. I'm sure that anyone would just focus on the way you look. But what I want from you is what's inside."

Astrid had loved hearing him say that. It was true, anyone who wanted to marry her only wanted her for her looks. But Hiccup was different. He appreciated her for who she was, not for how she looked. He loved everything about her there was to know. He didn't know it, but Astrid loved him the same way he loved her.

Their relationship soon reached new experiences. Whenever they came to the other side of an island, Hiccup would volunteer to help Astrid get to the next island. Of course, Astrid let him. With each flight they took, Astrid began to enjoy it more and more. Soon, she wasn't afraid of flying anymore. She enjoyed the times that she and Hiccup spent together, and she also enjoyed getting to know Heather and Firecracker as well. The more they traveled, the more they all became friends. And for Astrid and Hiccup, something more.

They had fallen in love with each other.

They had both met their true love.

* * *

><p>I know this chapter's short, but we're probably more than halfway done with the story already. I'm also still working on my other stories as well. Please review, follow, or favorite.

6. Chapter 6

Chapter 6: First Date

Thanks to all of those who pleaded, I've decided to continue and complete this story. I'm glad to see that there are people who are enjoying it!

* * *

><p>The journey back to Berk didn't take as long as they all thought it would. The island that was Astrid's home could be seen in the distance, a beautiful sight to see in the late afternoon. The small group looked out at the inhabited island from a much smaller island nearby. "There's your home," Hiccup said to Astrid. "I never thought I'd see it again," Astrid said. Heather and Firecracker had been trailing behind, and caught up with the two of them rather quickly.</p>

"Took us long enough to get here," Heather complained. "_Yeah, especially after all those times when we had to camp, which I have to say was actually very much needed,_" Firecracker said. Heather rolled her eyes. "I've forgotten why we decided to keep you as a pet," she said, "You're such a coward."

Hiccup paid very little attention to them. "I...I guess we better get going." He headed to the cliff of the island they were on, waiting for Astrid and the others to follow. "Hiccup, wait," Astrid said. Hiccup turned to face her. "What is it?" he asked.

Astrid hesitated. She could tell him right now how she felt about him. She loved him, but was she able to tell him that?

"I...I'm actually kind of hungry," she said nervously, "I was thinking maybe we should eat before we leave." "Really?" Hiccup asked. "Sure," Astrid said, "I mean, well, it wouldn't hurt if we all had one last meal together, right?" Hiccup shrugged. "I guess so."

"Now that you mention it," Heather said, "I'm actually kind of hungry too." "_Me too,_" Firecracker said.

Hiccup smiled. "Okay, I'll go get us some dinner." "And I'll get the firewood," Astrid said. They both walked off in different directions.

"Why do I get the feeling that's not what she was going to say to him?" Heather asked to no one in particular.

* * *

><p>About a half hour later, Astrid had returned to the cliff, and was setting up some wood for a fire. She had also found a big log to use as a sort of bench. She had just finished setting up the wood when she heard someone approaching from behind. She turned to see Hiccup walking over to the camp, his hands full of fish.</p>

"Let me get that for you," he said, shooting a fireball at the firewood. The wood was immediately set ablaze, warming them up. "Thanks," Astrid muttered. Hiccup smiled, and then he tossed the fish into the fire. Astrid gave him a nervous look. "Don't worry," he said, "I know what I'm doing."

After waiting a few minutes, Hiccup flapped his wings, and the fire went out almost instantly. The fish were just undercooked, so he scorched them lightly with his fire breath. "Have you done that before?" Astrid asked. "Sure I have," Hiccup replied, "Otherwise, I wouldn't have done it." He leaned down and picked the fish out of the burned pile of wood.

They both sat down on the log, and Hiccup handed Astrid one of the fish. "I wonder where Heather and Firecracker are," he said. Astrid nodded. "Me too." She took a bite out of her fish. After chewing for a few seconds, she swallowed and replied, "This is really good." Hiccup smiled at her. "Good, I'm glad you like it." He then took a huge bite out of his own fish.

Astrid stopped eating for a minute to look out at the island of Berk. "You know, we actually dine very differently back home," she said, a hint of disappointment in her voice. Hiccup shrugged. "You know you can actually come and visit us in our cave sometime," he offered. Astrid looked at him. "You'd really let me do that?" she asked. Hiccup shrugged again. "Sure, why not? We're all friends, right? I mean, well...you can if you want to, anyway." He started eating the rest of his fish, avoiding eye contact in case she refused.

But Astrid smiled at him. "I'd like that." Hiccup turned to look at her, swallowing the rest of his fish. He smiled back at her, his wings turning a bright red. After a moment of silence, Hiccup reached behind the log and pulled out a bouquet of flowers.

Astrid's eyes widened at what she saw. The flowers were probably the most beautiful things she had ever seen. Hiccup held them out to her. "I, uh...I got these for you. To use...at your wedding...when you get back home."

Astrid took the flowers from him and looked at them. "They're beautiful," she said. Hiccup smiled. "I know, that's why I got them for you." Astrid looked up at him. He continued to smile at her, his wings still a bright red. Astrid smiled back at him. "Thank you." Hiccup breathed a laugh as his wings turned a brighter shade of red.

After a minute of silence, Hiccup's smile faded. "Hey, Astrid?" Astrid's smile faded as well, and she set the bouquet of flowers on the log next to her. "Yes, Hiccup?" She tried not to sound too desperate to hear what he had to say. Is he going to do it? Will he say the three special words that I've been wanting to hear?

Hiccup shifted his position nervously. "I...I want to tell you...I want to...I, uh...I just want to say that...I need to tell you that I...I...I, uh..." He kept trying to tell her how he felt, but he couldn't form the right words. Why can't I do it? I've wanted for so long to tell her those three words, and I can't! Why can't I just tell her how I feel?

I love her.

He still didn't say anything. Her tried hard to gather up the courage to tell her the three words he had wanted to say to her since they first got to know each other. "I...I...I guess I...I really like you, Astrid." He was really disappointed that he didn't tell her how he really felt, but at least he said something.

Astrid was also a little disappointed that he didn't say what she wanted him to, but at least she knew that he liked her. She reached out, and took his hand in her own. Hiccup looked at her with confusion, but then smiled at her. She smiled back at him, and started to lean in. He leaned in as well, knowing what was that they were doing. But before their lips made contact, Heather and

Firecracker seemed to pop up out of nowhere.

"You gotta admit, this is pretty romantic," Heather said. Both Astrid and Hiccup gasped, snapping out of their trances. Heather shrugged. "Sorry for scaring you two, but you have to admit this is a very romantic scene." Firecracker nodded. Hiccup shrugged. "Yeah, I guess it is. Especially with the sunset and all." Astrid's muscles tensed up. "Sunset?!" She looked out at the horizon. Sure enough, the sun was beginning to set.

Astrid grabbed the bouquet of flowers and started heading for a nearby cave that they had set up earlier. She quickly grabbed a large piece of bark to use as a door. "What are you doing?" Hiccup asked, getting up and trying to follow her. "It's...it's late. It's very late, I mean..." Astrid was somewhat nervous. Heather gave her a look. "Are you afraid of the dark?"

Astrid paused before replying, "Yeah, a little, I guess, you know I think I better go inside." Hiccup wondered how going in the cave would help get ride of her fear of the dark, but he didn't question it. Astrid set the door in place and then turned to face him. "Good night." Hiccup shrugged. "Good night, I guess." Astrid smiled at him before heading inside the cave.

Firecracker was the first to turn his attention back to Hiccup. "Now I see what's going on here," he said smugly. "What are you talking about, Firecracker?" Hiccup asked, trying to sound as innocent as possible. Heather gave her brother a look. "Don't play dumb with us, there's no doubt that you two were dating." "I wasn't dating," Hiccup said, "I'm just trying to bring her home, that's all." Heather shook her head. "Hiccup, you can't deny the truth. Just go in that cave and tell her how you feel." Hiccup quickly stood up and looked at his sister. "I can't! I can't tell her. I mean, even if I did ever tell her that...well, you know. And I'm not saying that I do, because it...it just doesn't work out. Look at me, I'm a Halfling."

Heather just shrugged. "So what? You love her, don't you?" Hiccup sighed. "Even if I did, it'd never work out." "Well, I'm sure that we could figure something out," Heather said. "How?" Hiccup asked. Heather didn't answer. "How?!" Hiccup asked, more urgently. Heather sighed, and then she shrugged. "I don't know," she said quietly. Hiccup sighed in frustration. "That's what I thought." He walked off.

"Where are you going?" Heather asked. "Out for a walk," Hiccup said. "You never take walks," Heather said. "Then let this be the first time I do," Hiccup said as he walked into the forest.

* * *

><p>I'd like to thank all of those who have encouraged me to continue, and I'm hoping that you all enjoy my other stories. If there are some of you who haven't read any of my other stories, you can if you want to. Please review, follow, or favorite.

Just so you all know, my birthday is this Thursday, in case any of you want to submit a special story. Also, I'm hoping that many of you are enjoying my stories. According to KAOSMaster, I'm a new FanFiction legend!

* * *

><p>Heather eventually decided that if Hiccup wasn't going to go and talk to Astrid, then she would have to do it. Firecracker decided to come with her, despite the fact that Astrid didn't really seem to understand him.</p>

It was very late at night when Heather and Firecracker approached the cave that Astrid was in. Heather knocked on the makeshift door. "Astrid, are you in there?" "Go away," said a voice. "Astrid, is that you?" Heather asked, a confused look now on her face. "I said go away," Astrid said, "I need to rest."

Heather sighed. "Astrid, I'm coming in there." "NO! Don't come in here! Don't look at me!" But Heather didn't listen. She swung the door open. For a minute, there was nothing but silence, but then a figure moved swiftly past Heather and Firecracker, shutting the door. Heather squinted in the darkness of the cave. "Astrid, is that you?" The figure slowly turned to face the Halfling. It was Astrid, but she was different. Her skin was scaly, and a light blue, like her eyes. Her fingernails had grown into claws, and two wings sprouted out of her back.

Astrid had turned into a Halfling.

Without a word, Astrid fired a small fireball on a small pile of wood so that the cave was lit. As soon as Heather and Firecracker's eyes adjusted to the light, they saw what had happened to their friend.

"Astrid? What happened to you? You're, um...uh..." Heather tried to search for the right word. "_Different,_ " Firecracker finished. Astrid sighed. She had understood what the little dragon had said. "I'm a Halfling, I know." "_Well, yeah, I mean, well, was it something that you ate? Or is this some kinda illusion or something?_" Firecracker was really confused.

Astrid shook her head sadly. "I've been this way for as long as I can remember," she said, turning away. "What do you mean?" Heather asked. "_Yeah, we haven't ever seen you like this before,_ " Firecracker said. "It's a curse," Astrid said, "Every night, whenever the sun sets, I turn into this." She held up her clawed hands and examined them in the light of the fire. "I become a Halfling."

Heather and Firecracker both listened as Astrid explained everything about what the curse had done to her life. "For years, I've been trying to hide it, but it was hard not to go out after sunset. My parents decided that it was best to set up some sort of test to see who my true love was. That's why I have to go home, and marry my true love, before the sun sets and everyone sees me like this." "Why does it have to be true love?" Heather asked. "Becasue, love is the greatest force on the entire Earth," Astrid said, "It's the only thing strong enough to break the curse."

Firecracker felt sorry for his friend. "_C'mon Astrid, it's not that

bad, you're not a monster. Okay, I'm not gonna lie, you are kinda creepy-looking. But you only look this way at night. Hiccup and Heather are Halflings 24/7._" "But Firecracker," Astrid said, holding back tears, "I'm the chief's daughter. And this is not how I'm meant to look." She sobbed quietly, as to not draw the attention of anyone who could be outside, near the cave.

Heather walked over and put a hand on Astrid's shoulder. "Astrid, maybe it's best if you don't marry any of the Vikings back home." "But I have to," Astrid said, "Only a kiss from my true love can break the curse and make me normal." Heather turned Astrid around so that they were facing each other. "But you know, you are kind of a Halfling, and with Hiccup...well, you two have actually got a lot in common." Astrid's eyes widened at the Halfling's name.

"Hiccup?"

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, the male Halfling was making his way back to camp, rehearsing to himself.</p>

"Hey, Astrid, how are you? Good? Well, I'm good too. Okay, I was thinking about how I gave you those flowers earlier, and I remembered when you said that you thought they were beautiful. And I sort of got them for you, because, well, I think that you're also beautiful. But that's not the only reason I like you, I mean..." He sighed. "Oh, gods, I'm in trouble." He then noticed the cave that Astrid was in. He sighed again. "I have to do this." He took a deep breath. "Okay, here I go."

He walked over to the cave, and was about to knock on the door when he heard Astrid talking to Heather and Firecracker.

"Look at me, guys. I mean, really. Who in their right mind could ever love a _Halfling_? A human and a Halfling don't go together, that's why I can't just stay here with Hiccup. My only chance of ever being truly happy is if I marry my true love. Don't you understand? That's how it has to be."

Hiccup listened to this, and from what he heard, it sounded like Astrid was talking about him. He backed away from the door, his eyes welling up with tears.

She's right, he thought to himself, _Who could ever love a Halfling? I was a fool to fall in love with her. I knew it would never work out._ He turned to the island of Berk in the distance. Sighing, he spread his wings, and headed off in the direction of the island. He tried not to notice the tears falling down his face as he flew.

* * *

><p>However, back in the cave, Astrid was still talking to Heather and Firecracker. She hadn't been talking about Hiccup, but about herself being a Halfling. "It's the only way to break the curse." Heather and Firecracker both looked at her with confused looks. "Well, you have to at least tell Hiccup the truth," Firecracker said, heading for the door.

"No!" Astrid cried, "You can't tell him. Nobody can know about this." She pointed to her dragon features. Firecracker sighed in frustration. "_What's the point of talking if you gotta keep secrets?_" "Just promise that you won't tell him," Astrid pleaded.

Heather sighed. "Alright, we won't tell him." She started to make her way for the door before she stopped and turned to Astrid.

"But you should."

Astrid nodded, not really taking in what Heather had told her. Satisfied, both Heather and Firecracker left the cave. After making sure they had left, Astrid shut the door. She turned and spotted the bouquet of flowers that Hiccup had given to her. She moved the flowers away from the fire, and grabbed one of them. She then started to pull off the petals, one by one.

"Tell him...Tell him not...Tell him...Tell him not..."

The questioning went on until she came down to the last few petals.

"Tell him...Tell him not..."

The last petal. Astrid pulled it off, a smile on her face.

"I tell him."

She turned and rushed out of the cave, the bouquet clutched tightly in her arms. "Hiccup? Hiccup, there's something that I have to..."

But Hiccup wasn't there. And even worse, the sun was beginning to rise. Astrid covered her eyes as the sun's light enveloped her. Her dragon features disappeared, her wings tucking into her back, her claws shortening into fingernails, and the blue scales disappearing and being replaced with human flesh. Astrid looked at her hands to see the last few scales disappearing. She was human again.

She turned her attention to the sound of flapping wings, and saw Hiccup landing on the cliff of the island. She grabbed the flowers and ran up to him. "Hiccup. Are you okay?"

The Halfling barely noticed her, but he gave a slight nod. "Yeah, sure, never been better." He started to walk away. Astrid frowned. There was a somewhat upset tone in his voice. "Listen, Hiccup, there's something that I have to tell you." Hiccup stopped and turned to face her. "You don't have to say anything," he said sadly, "I heard what you said last night."

Astrid was surprised to say in the least. "You heard what I said?" Hiccup nodded. "Every word." He sat down on the log-bench. Astrid was confused now. "I thought that you would understand." Hiccup nodded. "I do understand," he said, "You were right. Who could ever love a Halfling?" There was a moment of silence before he continued. "Let's face it, a human like you and a Halfling like me, it'd never work out."

Astrid was still confused for a minute, but as she thought about what

Hiccup had said, she realized that it was all a misunderstanding.
"Oh, Hiccup, I...that's not what I meant, I was just..."

Just then, a Viking horn sounded. Astrid turned to see a ship heading for the island. Hiccup stood up and gestured to the ship. "By the way, I brought you something."

As the ship came closer, Astrid recognized it as one of Berk's. She saw her father on the ship, along with a few people she didn't know.

It didn't take long for the ship to dock on the island. Arter was the first to get off. He rushed up to meet his daughter. "Astrid!" The confused girl hesitated for a minute, but then she took off running to meet her father. They hugged tightly. Arter looked up at Hiccup. "You brought her back." Hiccup nodded. "As promised."

Both Arter and Astrid pulled out of the hug. "You have earned our respect and our alliance," Arter said to Hiccup, "If you ever need anything from now on, all you have to do is ask us. Would you like to return to your cave?" Hiccup shook his head. "I think I'd rather stay on this island, thank you."

Arter was quite surprised by Hiccup's decision, but he didn't question it. He grabbed Astrid by her shoulders and led her to the ship. "There's someone you need to meet," he said.

At that moment, Snotlout lept out of the boat and walked up to the two of them. "You must be Astrid," he said to her, holding out his hand, "I am Snotlout Jorgenson, your future husband."

Astrid hadn't been more disgusted or shocked in her whole life. This was the guy she was marrying? She shot her father a startled and confused look. "It's for the best," he said. Then he leaned in and whispered, "You'll be rid of the curse in no time." Astrid then looked up at Hiccup, who turned away sadly.

Astrid sighed. "I accept your proposal," she said to Snotlout. Of course, the rude Viking couldn't have been more pleased. "Good, I'll start the plans, for tomorrow, we'll be wed." "NO!" Both Arter and Astrid screamed. Everyone looked at them in confusion, especially Hiccup.

Astrid hesitated before she said, "I mean, why wait? Why don't we get married today, before the sun sets?" As much as she hated marrying Snotlout, she felt as though she had no choice but to follow her father's request.

Snotlout accepted Astrid's idea. "Of course, the sooner the better. Now let's get going." They all boarded the ship, Astrid glancing back at Hiccup, who was walking away. Astrid tried not to notice the tear sliding down her cheek as she watched him walk away.

* * *

><p>Obviously, there's a huge misunderstanding between the two lovers, but you don't have to worry. It'll all work out in the end. But, of course, I can't say exactly what happens, I don't want to spoil anything. Review, follow, or favorite.

8. Chapter 8

Chapter 8: True Love

I would like to thank everyone for their appreciation of this story, and just for the record, I would like to know who Guest is. Not their real name, but what their username is. The moment of truth For this story!

* * *

><p>Hiccup had gone deep into the forest by the time the ship had made it back to Berk. He didn't want to see Astrid leaving him, and he couldn't stand the thought of living so close to her and not being with her, so he decided to live on the island from then on.</p>

It was in the middle of the afternoon when Heather and Firecracker finally caught up with him. He was sitting on a rock, his back to them.

"There you are! Where have you been?! We've been looking all over for you! And where's Astrid?" Heather bombarded her brother with questions and complaints. Hiccup sighed. "Astrid's gone back to Berk with her father and future husband," he said sadly. This caused Heather to become confused. "You mean you just let her go? Why?"

Hiccup sighed. "You were right all along, Heather. Humans hate us. They always judge us by our looks, and they never try to get to know us." This confused Heather even more. "What in the world are you talking about?!" "Don't you remember? She said to you last night 'who could love a Halfling,' and I'm sure that you should be at least a little offended." Heather sighed in frustration. "You're still not making any sense."

"Okay then, fine, I admit, I loved her. I loved her more than anything. I loved her with all my heart, and she hated me. A human like her and a Halfling like me don't go together. I heard the three of you talking." Now both Heather and Firecracker knew what Hiccup was talking about. "_She wasn't talking about you, Hiccup, she was talking about herse_—" Heather covered Firecracker's mouth and said quickly, "Someone else." Firecracker realized that he had nearly blown Astrid's secret, and he gave Heather an apologetic look.

There was a moment of silence before Hiccup turned around and looked up at them. "She wasn't talking about me?" he asked, his voice full of hope. Heather and Firecracker nodded. Hiccup stood up. "Then who was she talking about?" he asked. Now he was confused. "Let's just say that she cares about you more than you think," Heather said.

Hiccup's heart warmed for the first time that day. "She does?" Heather nodded. "More than you've ever known." Hiccup smiled, then he lunged forward and hugged his sister tightly. Heather was stunned, to say in the least. But she didn't hesitate to hug him back. "I never thought that I'd say this," Hiccup said, "But I never could have asked for a better sister." Heather smiled, hugging him tighter. "And I could never ask for a better brother."

They both pulled out of the embrace, and looked at each other awkwardly. "So, how much does Astrid care about me?" Hiccup asked. "_What are you asking us for?_" said Firecracker, "_Why don't you go ask her?_" Hiccup's eyes widened. "The wedding! We have to stop it!" "Don't worry," Heather said with a smile, "We know someone who can help."

* * *

><p>On Berk, in the late afternoon, Astrid was looking at herself in the mirror. She had put on a flower crown that she was supposed to wear during the wedding. She looked beautiful with it on, but she wasn't happy. She looked down at the bouquet of flowers that Hiccup had given her the day before. She picked them up and looked at them. Every time she saw them, they reminded her of Hiccup.</p>

I never got to tell him that I love him, she thought to herself as a tear slid down her cheek and landed somewhere in the bouquet. Arter then poked his head in her room. "Astrid? Are you alright?" Astrid wiped her tears and looked at her father. "I'm fine, Dad." Arter nodded. "Good, wedding's in five minutes. You look beautiful." He shut the door and left. Astrid looked at herself in the mirror once more before she left the room, the flowers in her hands.

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><p>When Hiccup, Heather and Firecracker arrived on Berk, the sun was close to setting, and the wedding had begun. They headed to the plaza, where the wedding was being held. Hiccup started to advance, but Firecracker flew ahead and stopped him. "Hiccup, wait! You wanna do this right, don't 'cha?" Hiccup sighed in frustration. "What are you talking about?" "_There's a line that you have to wait for,_" Firecracker said, "_The preacher's gonna say 'speak now or forever hold your peace,' and that's when you can say 'I object!'_"

Hiccup sighed again. "Look, I don't have time for this!" He tried to push past Firecracker, but the little dragon blocked him. "_Hey, wait a second, hold on! Now look, you love this girl, don't you?_"

"Yes."

"_You want to tell her that?_"

"Yes!"

"_You wanna be there for her?_"

"YES!"

"_Then you gotta do things right!_" Firecracker shouted. "He has a point," Heather said, walking up form behind her brother, "It could be what you need to do to make a good impression." Hiccup was really frustrated now. "Okay, okay, okay! When does the preacher say the line?!" Heather and Firecracker looked at each other for a second before the dragon came up with a solution.

"_We gotta check it out!_"

With that, Firecracker poked his head around the corner of a house, and looked into the plaza. "What do you see?" Hiccup whispered. "_The whole village is there,_" Firecracker said. He looked again. "_They're in the alter._" He watched for a minute before gasping. "_Oh, Dragonfeathers! He already said it!_" The two Halflings gasped. Heather put her hand on Hiccup's shoulder. "Forget good impressions, go get your girl!" Hiccup didn't need to be told twice. He spread his wings and flew out into the open.

"I object!"

Everyone's attention was now on the Halfling as he flew toward the alter. Astrid and Snotlout were there, along with Fishlegs, who was serving as the preacher under Snotlout's command. Astrid's eyes widened when she saw the Halfling. "Hiccup?" Fishlegs nervously backed away. Snotlout grunted. "Now what does he want?!"

As he drew near the alter, Hiccup dropped to the ground, walking the rest of the way. He turned to look at the crowd of Vikings, who were all standing up to get a good view of him. "I hate to interrupt," the Halfling said calmly, "But there's a few things that need to be taken care of." "What are you doing here?" Astrid asked, trying to sound like she didn't care about him. Snotlout grunted again. "It's rude enough being alive when no one likes you, but showing up, uninvited, to a wedding...!"

"Astrid!" Hiccup said suddenly, climbing the stairs to the alter, "Listen, I have to talk to you!" "Oh, now you want to talk?" Astrid said, still pretending she didn't care, "Well, it's a little late for that, so if you'll excuse me..." She started to turn back to Snotlout, but Hiccup stopped her. "But you can't marry him!" Astrid was relieved to hear him say that, but she pretended to be mad. "And why not?!" Hiccup hesitated. "Becuase...Because the only reason that he's marrying you is so that he can become the chief!" At the sound of this, there were murmurs amongst the other Vikings.

Snotlout was really mad now. "It's a lie!" He turned to Astrid. "My love, do not listen to him..." But Hiccup cut him off. "He's not your true love! He doesn't even love you!" It was true, Snotlout didn't love Astrid at all. But Astrid pretended not to listen. "Well, what do you know about true love?" This caused Hiccup to stutter, and his wings blushed a brighter red than ever before. Astrid's expression changed. She hadn't meant to hurt him.

Just then, Snotlout started laughing. "Oh, this is just too priceless! The Halfling has fallen in love with the chief's daughter!" He continued laughing, shooting a glare at his servants, who started laughing nervously at his command. The crowd of Vikings continued to murmur insults about Snotlout and his personality. There weren't too many people laughing, but it was enough to make Hiccup embarrassed.

Astrid took a step toward the Halfling. "Hiccup, is it true?" Hiccup looked at her, and was about to answer when Snotlout cut in. "Who cares?! It'd never work out!" He then turned back to Astrid and took her hand. "Astrid, we're only a kiss away from a happy future together, now kiss me!"

But Astrid didn't move. She looked at Hiccup, who shook his head, silently begging her not to do it. Astrid turned to Snotlout with an

angry expression. "No," she said firmly. Snotlout looked at her in shock. Astrid wretched her hand out of the rude Viking's grasp, then reached up and took off her flower crown, tossing it aside along with the bouquet. "Hiccup's right. I can't marry you. You don't love me. You're a rude creep who cares about nothing but himself!" She then looked at the now setting sun. "It'd never work out," she said. She then turned to Hiccup. "There's something that you need to see," she said to him. She then turned walked toward the other end of the alter. "There's something you all need to see," she said for everyone to hear.

Hiccup started after her, but stopped when she turned to face them. She closed her eyes as the sun sank on the horizon. It was then that she began to change. Lines appeared on her skin, zigzagging into each other, forming scales. Her skin turned a light blue, and her fingernails grew into claws. When it seemed that it was over, a pair of blue, scaly wings burst out of her back. She was a Halfling again.

Many of the Vikings gasped, even a woman in the crowd fainted. Astrid opened her eyes and looked at Hiccup. The male Halfling was surprised to say in the least. He suddenly understood what she had been hiding from him all that time and why. He cautiously took a step forward. "Astrid?" When she didn't respond, he walked up to her. She watched him approach, her eyes never leaving him. He stopped when he was only a few inches away from her. Astrid sighed. "I wanted to show you before," she said, "I'm sorry, Hiccup. I never wanted to offend you in any way." Hiccup now understood what Astrid had meant. "You were talking about yourself, weren't you?" Astrid nodded. Hiccup gave her a small smile. "You know, even as a Halfling, you're still beautiful." Astrid's eyes widened. "Really?" Hiccup nodded. Astrid smiled at him.

The moment was ruined when Snotlout suddenly shouted, "It's a monster!" Both Astrid and Hiccup turned to look at him. Snotlout called for his servants. "I order you to get them both out of my sight, NOW!" All of the servants rushed forward, and tried to grab the Halflings. Hiccup tried to keep them from grabbing Astrid, but he was overpowered by their numbers. Soon, both of the Halflings were being held onto. "I declare that this marriage is binding, and that means that I'm the chief!" Snotlout shouted. He then pointed at Hiccup. "And as the chief, I banish all of his kind off the face of these islands!" He then turned to Astrid. "And as for you, my wife," He drew out his sword and pointed it at her neck, "I will have you sent back to that island for the rest of you days!"

Hiccup pulled his arm free of the servants, and whistled loudly. A dark shadow covered the area, but Snotlout barely noticed. "I will have perfection! I will have order! I will have...!" A loud roar split the air as the Red Death landed behind the alter, leaned down, and swallowed Snotlout in one gulp.

That was his last monologue.

Heather and Firecracker were on top of the Red Death's head, looking down at everyone. "Alright, nobody move!" Heather shouted, "We have a mad dragon here, and we're not afraid to use it!" The Red Death roared again, louder this time. Hiccup and Astrid stared up at Heather in amazement. "Don't worry," the Halfling replied, "Turns out, all the Dragon Queen here needed was a friend or two." She

patted the dragon, who crooned.

Arter then stood up in the crowd. "Release my daughter and the Halfling at once!" he ordered. The servants, now without their master, let go of the two Halflings. Now free from their restraints, the two Halflings hugged each other tightly. After a minute, they both pulled out of the embrace.

"Astrid, remember when you said 'Who could love a Halfling?'" Hiccup asked, taking her hands in his own. Astrid shrugged. "Yeah, why?" Hiccup smiled at her. "I think the question you should be asking is 'Who could love me while I'm a Halfling?'" he said. Astrid was a bit confused. "Who could love me while I'm a Halfling?" she asked. Hiccup's smile widened as he answered her question.

"Me."

Astrid's eyes widened at what she heard. "Hiccup, are you saying that...?" "Yes, Astrid," Hiccup replied. He paused for a few seconds before he said what he had been wanting to tell her since the day before.

"I love you."

Astrid was both surprised and overjoyed. Hiccup had just said the three words that she had been hoping to hear. She had thought that he loved her, but she had to know for sure. "Really?" she asked. Hiccup squeezed her hands. "With all my heart," he said. Astrid smiled, and put her hands on his shoulders. "I love you too," she said. Hiccup felt a sudden warmth spread throughout his entire body. "Really?" he asked. Astrid's smile widened. "With all my heart." The two of them smiled at each other. They had both confessed their feelings at last. They both leaned in until they met in a gentle, loving kiss.

The kiss was spreading feelings that neither of them had ever felt before. Their hearts warmed, and the warmth spread throughout their bodies. They both deepened the kiss, and Hiccup enveloped her in his wings. As they kissed, Astrid's dragon features altered. The skin of her wings became thicker and stronger, her scales hardened slightly, and her claws grew sharper. She barely noticed as she relaxed into the kiss that they were sharing.

When they finally pulled away, Hiccup looked at Astrid and noticed her slightly altered features. "Astrid, are you okay?" Now noticing the changes, Astrid looked at her claws. "Yeah, but...I don't understand. I thought that I would be normal." Hiccup sighed, smiling at her. "I think you're already normal," he said. Astrid looked up at him. "What do you mean?" Hiccup's smile widened as he took her hand in his own. "Maybe you were meant to be a Halfling all along," he said, "Maybe we were really meant to be. I think...this might be the real you." Astrid then smiled at him, her wings blushing a light red.

Hiccup noticed her wings and his smile widened. "Your wings are turning red." Astrid looked behind herself to see that he was right. "That's something I thought I'd never hear anyone say to me," she admitted. The two Halflings smiled at one another before they pulled each other into a tight hug. They were together at last.

"Astrid," Hiccup said suddenly, "I know that it's only been at least

a minute after our first kiss, but since we're both Halflings, and we both love each other I was wondering if maybe you would...be my mate." Astrid smiled and tightened the hug. "I'd love to."

Arter watched the two of them, and an idea suddenly came to him. "Perhaps this could work," he said to himself.

* * *

><p>Five years later, all three Halflings and Firecracker were all living in a house built for them on the very edge of the forest, overlooking the village. Because he was Astrid's mate, Hiccup was now officially next in line to be chief. But he didn't mind. He was with his true love, and that was all that mattered.</p>

He was looking out the window when he felt a small tug on his leg. He looked down to see a small, green, male Halfling gripping his leg. "C'mon, daddy, you said you'd play with me!" the little Halfling complained. Hiccup laughed, reaching down and taking his son in his arms. "Alright, just a minute." He looked over at Astrid and the others, who were with two more young Halflings. Astrid looked up and smiled at her mate. He smiled back at her as she stood up and walked toward him.

Realizing what his parents might do, the little Halfling covered his eyes, and peeked through his fingers. Sure enough, the two Halflings leaned in and kissed. Their son watched them with wide eyes. It wasn't the first time they'd done that in front of him, and it certainly wouldn't be the last.

The two Halflings pulled away, and looked into each other's eyes. "Are you up for a flight later?" Hiccup asked. Astrid smiled at him. "You know I am." Hiccup smiled at her, his heart full of love.

"I love you, Astrid."

"I love you too, Hiccup."

* * *

><p>Yes! They finally got together, and they even had kids! Please review and tell me what you thought of this story!

End
file.